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amar chitra katha

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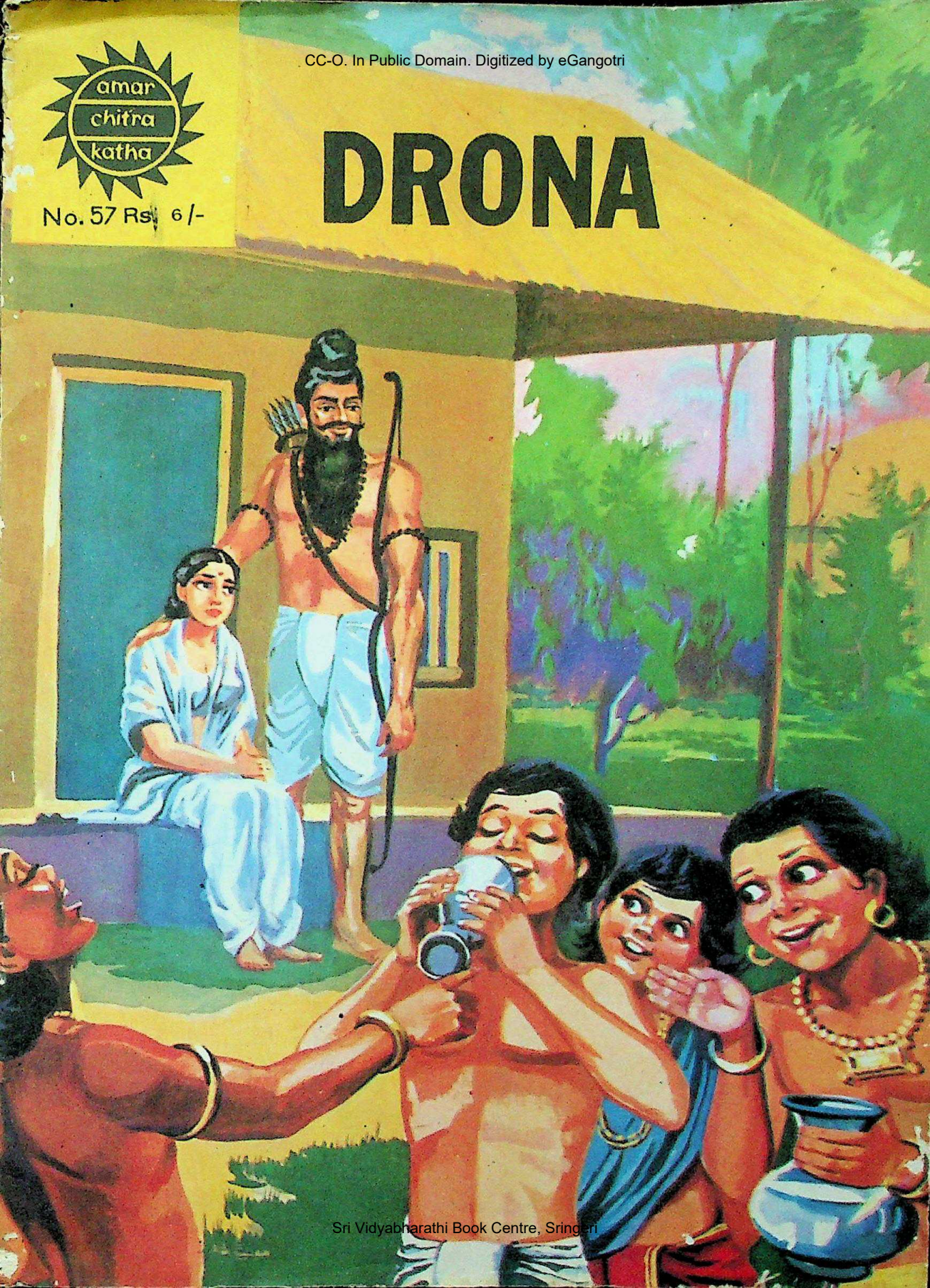
DRONA



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Drona, the valiant archer, is second only to Bheeshma among the respected elders of Mahabharata. Yet he remains an outsider. He added a streak of personal vendetta to that tale of family feud.

Drona had studied together with Drupada, who later became king of Panchala, in the ashram of Agnivesha. When he is unable to buy a glass of milk for his beloved son, he turns for help to his childhood friend. But when Drupada humiliates him, he goes to Hastinapura and becomes the teacher of military science to the Pandavas and Kauravas. His faith that Arjuna alone, amongst the Kaurava and Pandava princes, can avenge his humiliation, makes him bestow special attention on this prince.

It seems very cruel on his part to have demanded the thumb of Ekalavya, the great archer, but here again he had little choice but to pamper Arjuna.

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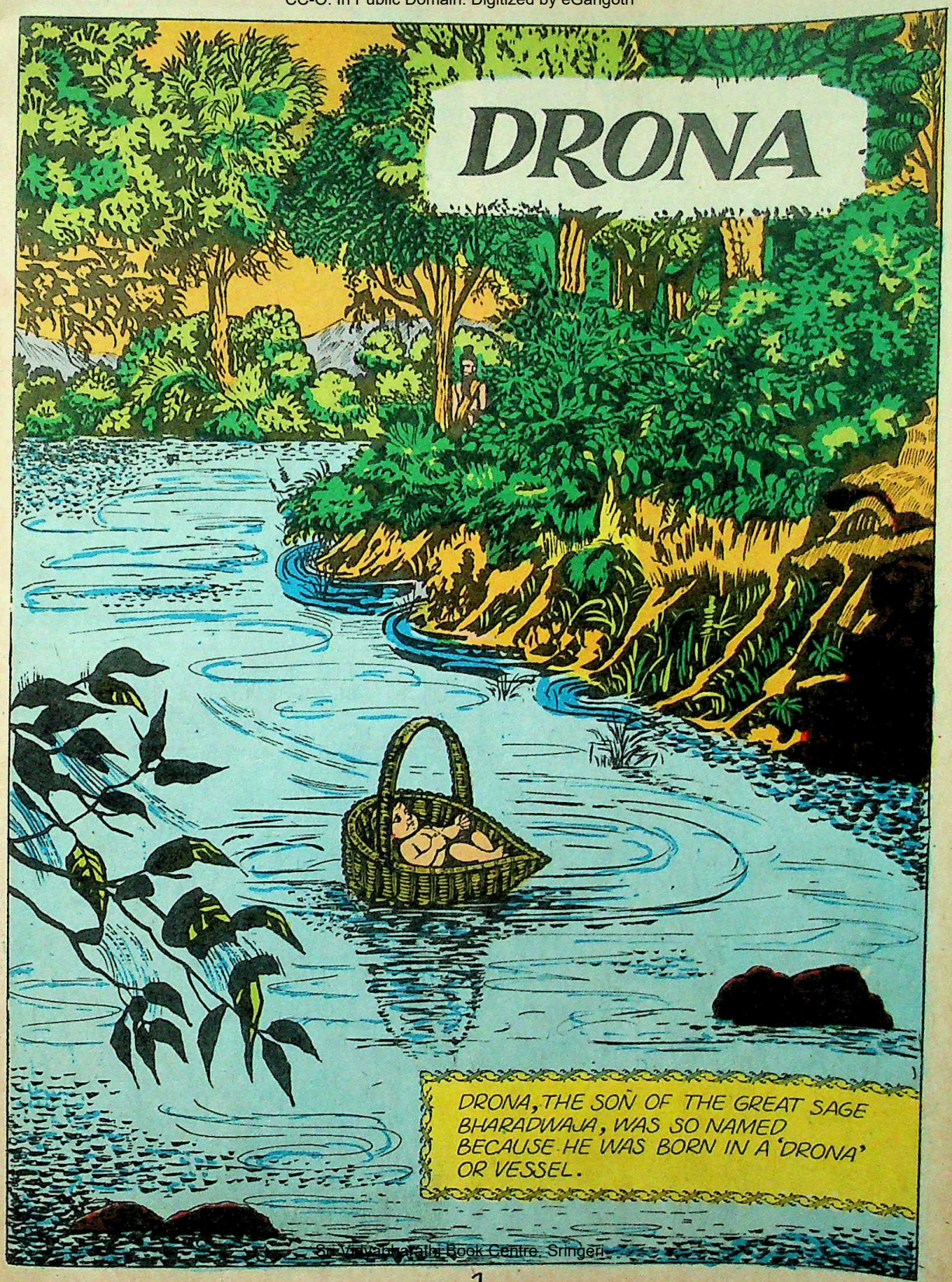

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BHARADWAJA HAD A FRIEND IN PRISHATA, THE KING OF PANCHALA.

DRONA IS A CLEVER BOY. LET HIM BE A COMPANION TO MY SON, DRUPADA.

AS YOU WISH, SIR.

THE TWO BOYS BEGAN THEIR STUDIES.

DRONA, A BRILLIANT PUPIL, SOON MASTERED THE VEDAS AND VEDANGAS.

DRONA, HOW I WISH I WERE CLEVER LIKE YOU.

BUT YOU ARE STRONGER.

ONE DAY BHARADWAJA CALLED DRONA TO HIM.

SON, NOW YOU MUST GO TO RISHI AGNIVESHA. LEARN THE SCIENCE OF ARMS FROM HIM.

Sri Vidyabharathi Boo

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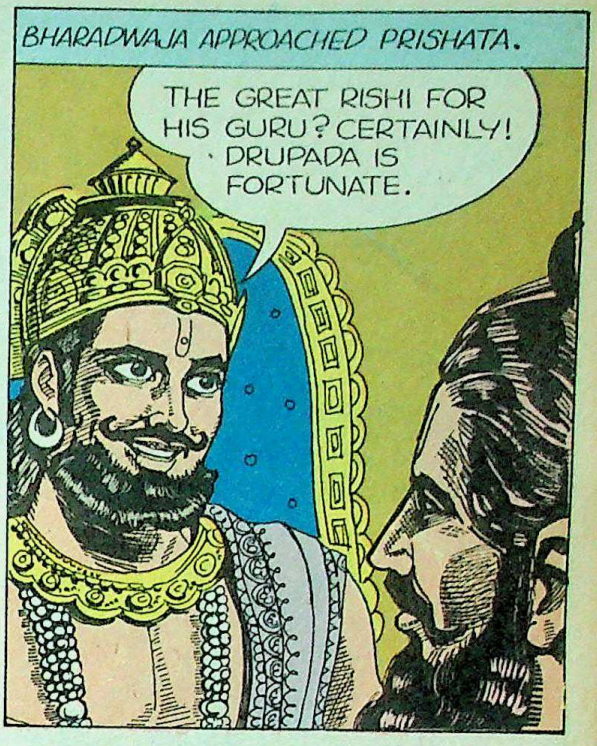

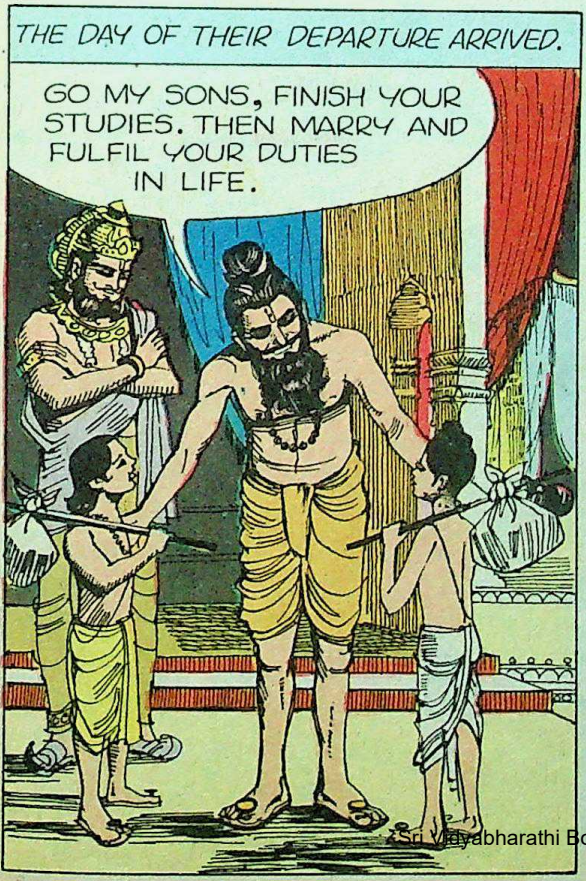

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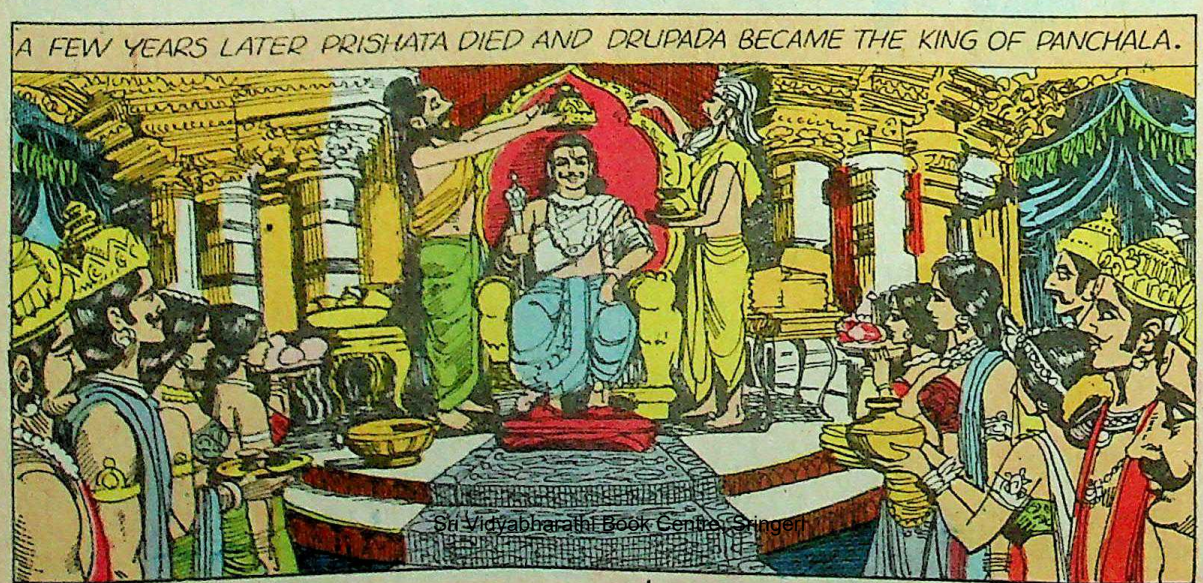

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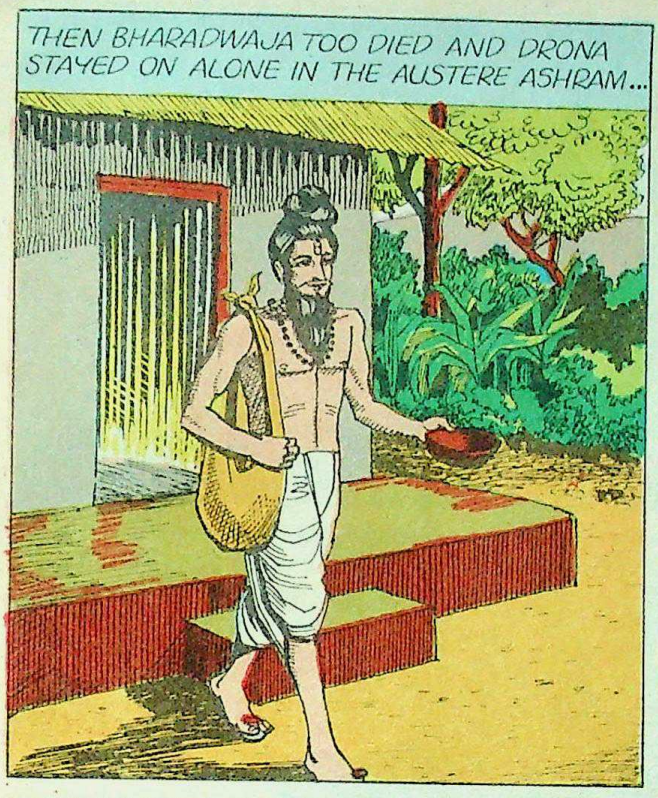

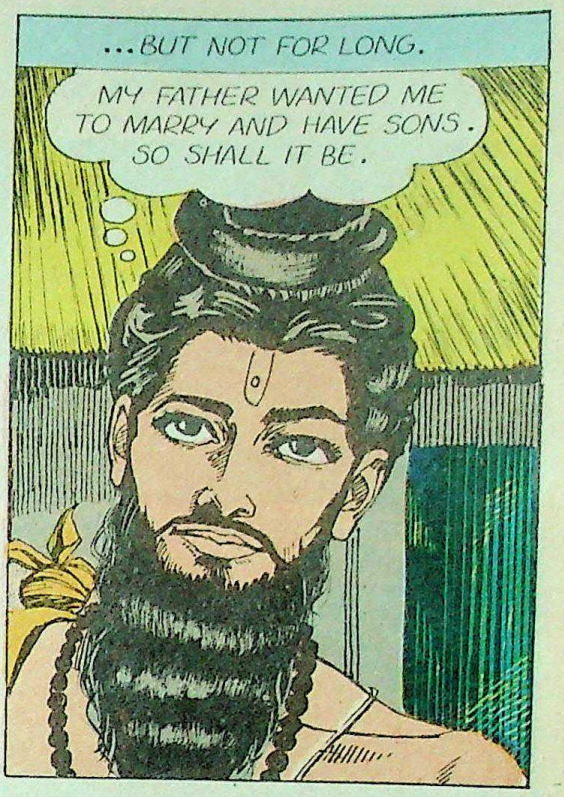

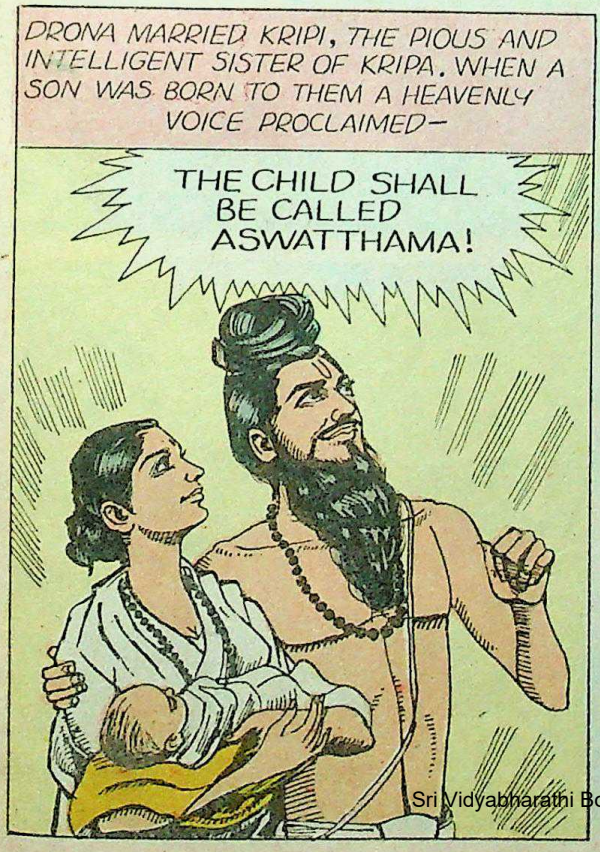

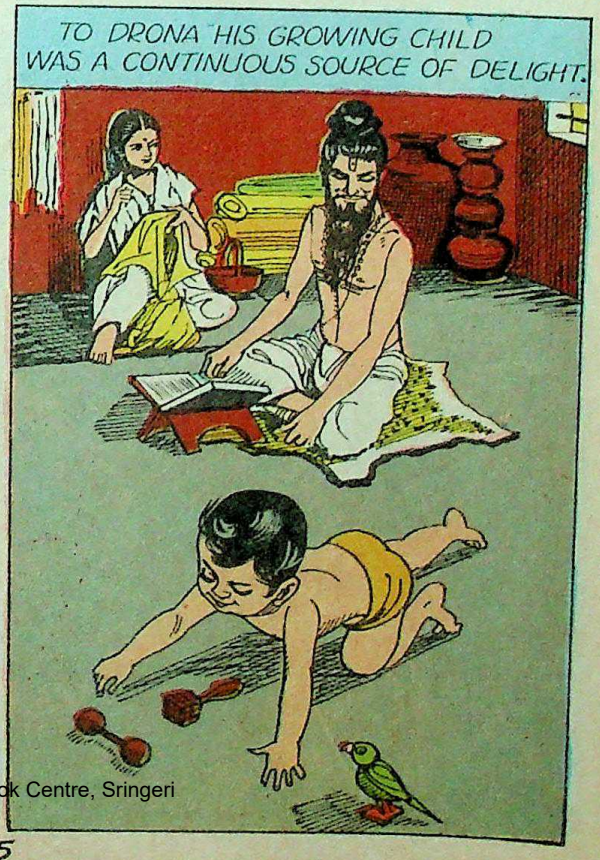

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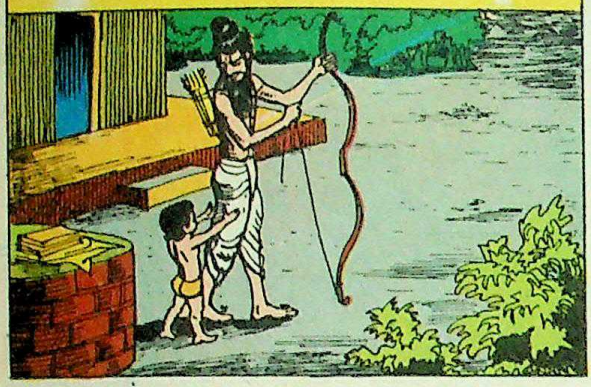
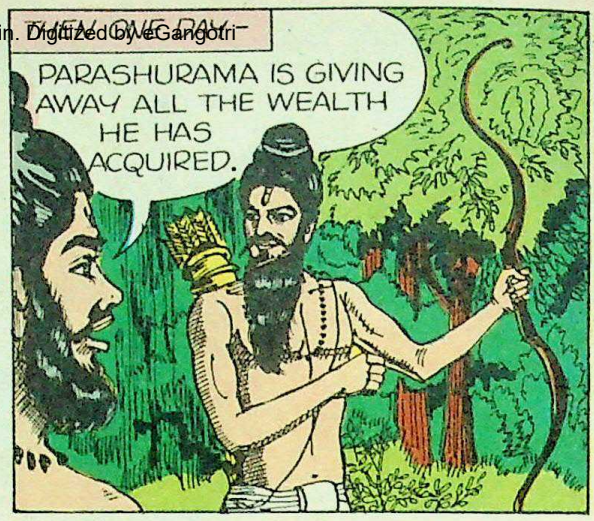
ASWATTHAMA EVEN SUCCEEDED IN DIVERTING HIM FROM HIS FAVOURITE PASTIME, THE PURSUIT OF THE SCIENCE OF ARMS.



ONE DAY—

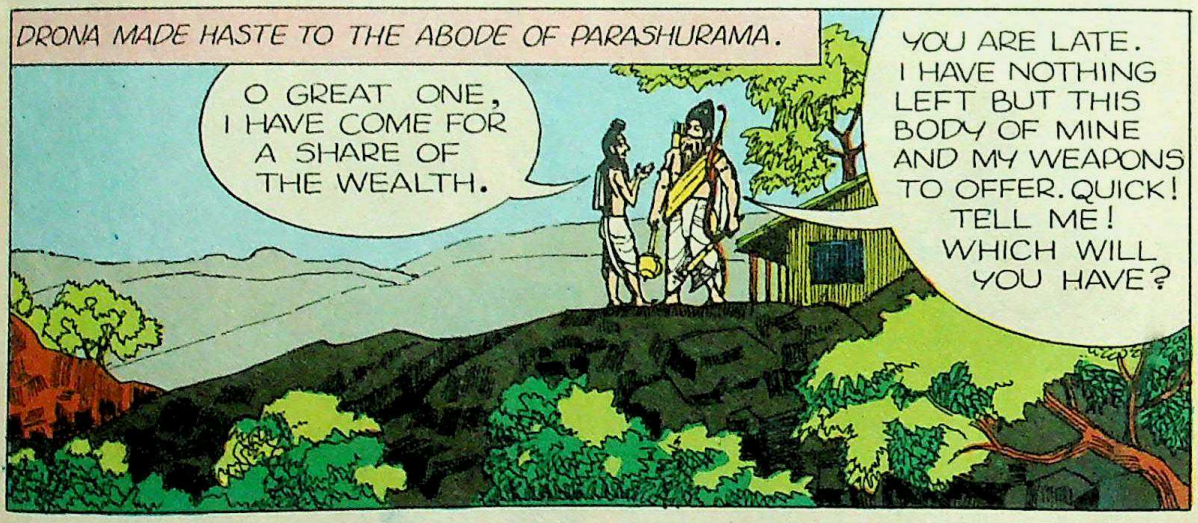
PARASHURAMA IS GIVING AWAY ALL THE WEALTH HE HAS ACQUIRED.



DRONA MADE HASTE TO THE ABODE OF PARASHURAMA.

O GREAT ONE, I HAVE COME FOR A SHARE OF THE WEALTH.

YOU ARE LATE. I HAVE NOTHING LEFT BUT THIS BODY OF MINE AND MY WEAPONS TO OFFER. QUICK! TELL ME! WHICH WILL YOU HAVE?



I CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS WITH THE MANTRAS FOR THEIR USE.

THEY ARE YOURS.

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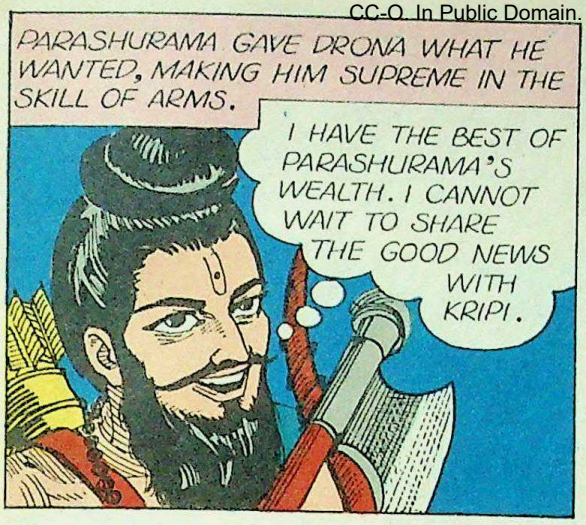

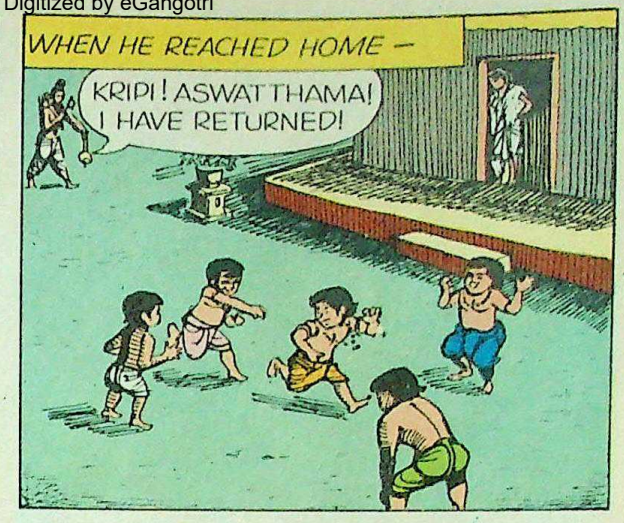

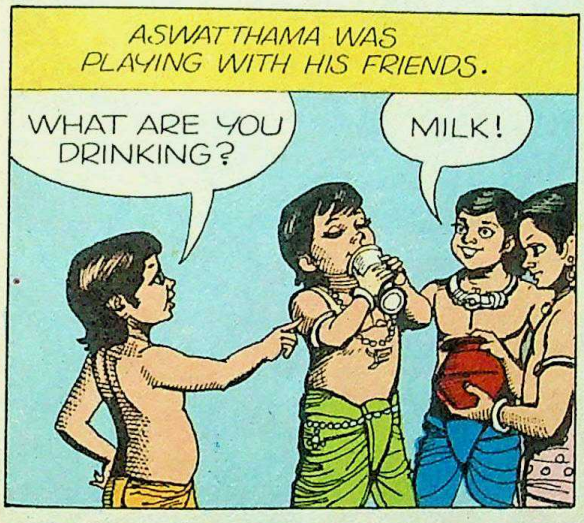

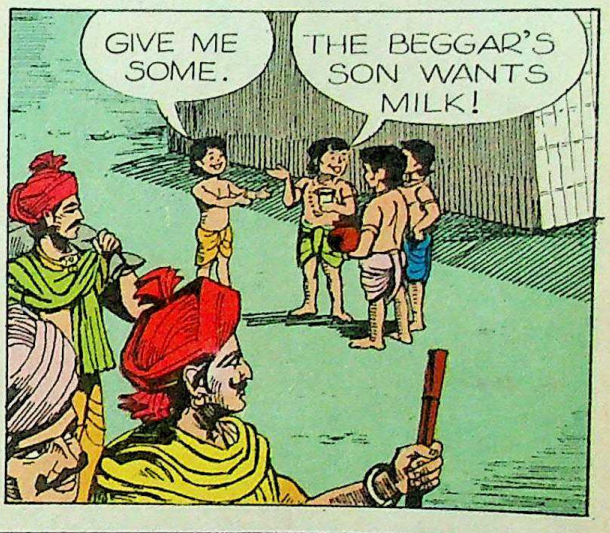

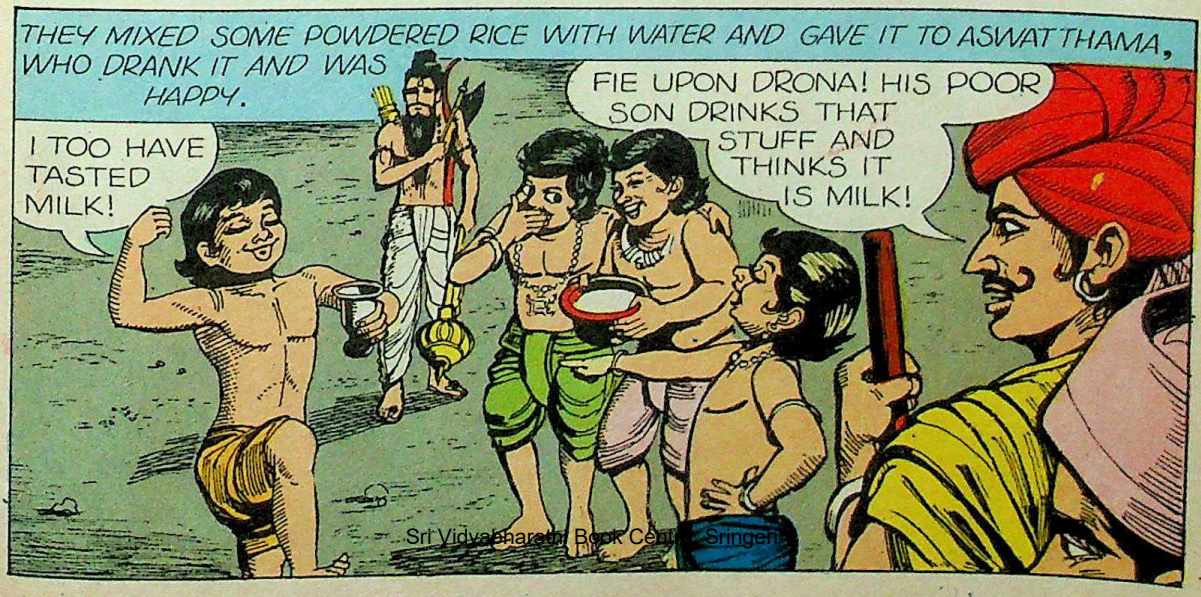

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DRONA WAS MOVED AND ASHAMED BY WHAT HE SAW AND HEARD.

I SHALL TAKE KRIPI AND ASWATTHAMA TO DRUPADA. HE WILL WELCOME US AND HE CAN SHARE MY NEW WEALTH.

SO THEY SET OUT FOR DRUPADA'S KINGDOM.

IN DRUPADA'S PALACE ASWATTHAMA WILL DRINK THE RICHEST OF MILK, KRIPI. DRUPADA LOVES ME AS HIS OWN BROTHER.

DRUPADA, I HAVE COME. REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE TO ME, MY FRIEND? NOW YOU CAN FULFIL IT.

NO MEASLY BRAHMAN CAN BE A KING'S FRIEND!

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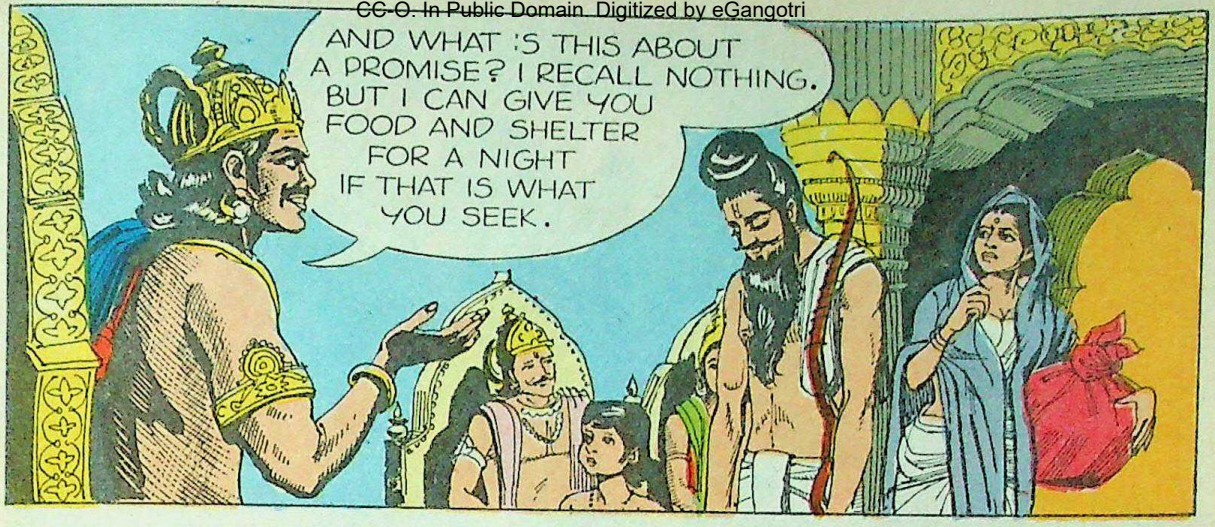

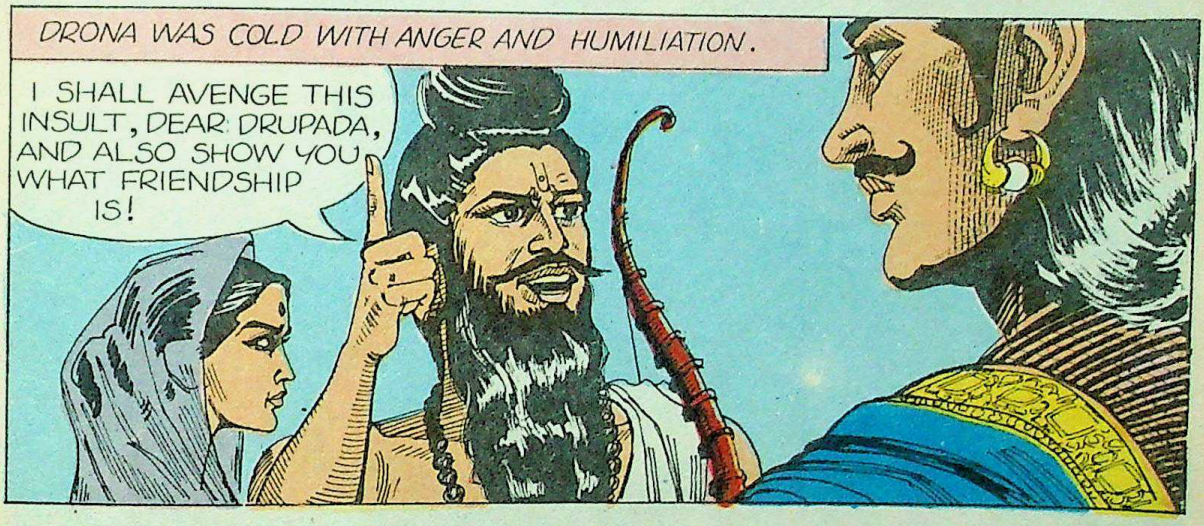

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KRIPA WAS THE GURU OF THE PANDAVA AND KAURAVA PRINCES AT THE KURU PALACE IN HASTINAPURA. HE WELCOMED THEM AS DRONA HAD EXPECTED.

DEAR KRIPA, FOR CERTAIN REASONS I WANT YOU TO KEEP MY PROWESS IN THE SCIENCE OF ARMS A SECRET.

LET IT BE SO!

ONE DAY THE KURU PRINCES CAME OUT OF THE CITY TO PLAY BALL IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE.

OH! WHAT ILL LUCK! THE BALL HAS FALLEN IN.

I CAN SEE IT. BUT IT IS DEEP DOWN.

JUST THEN DRONA ARRIVED ON THE SCENE. NO ONE HAD SEEN HIM APPROACHING.

SHAME ON YOUR PRINCELY MIGHT AND YOUR SKILL IN ARMS!

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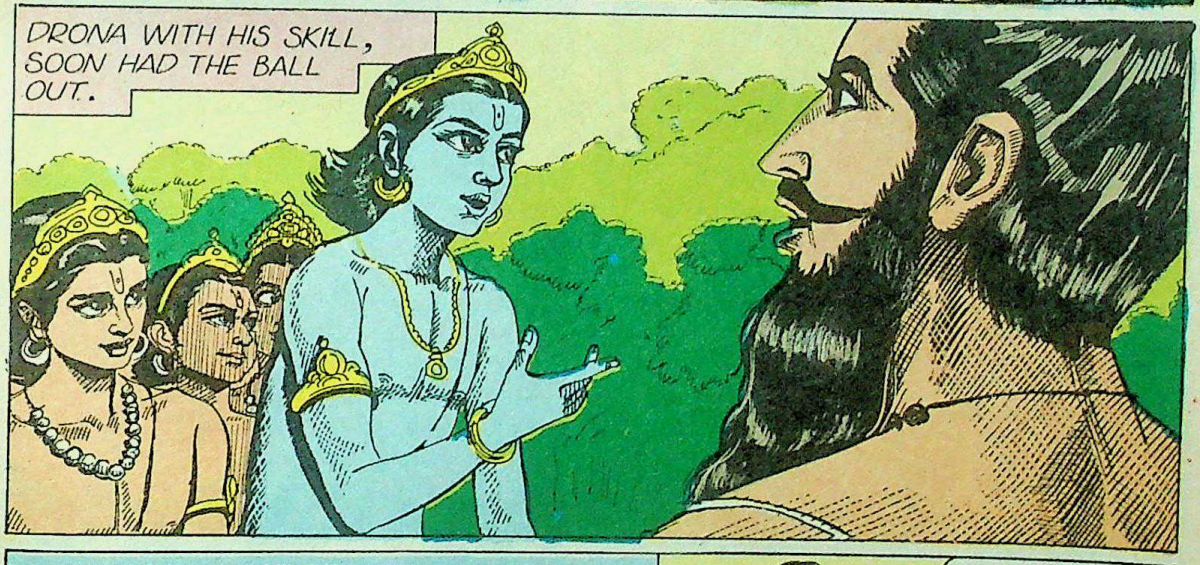

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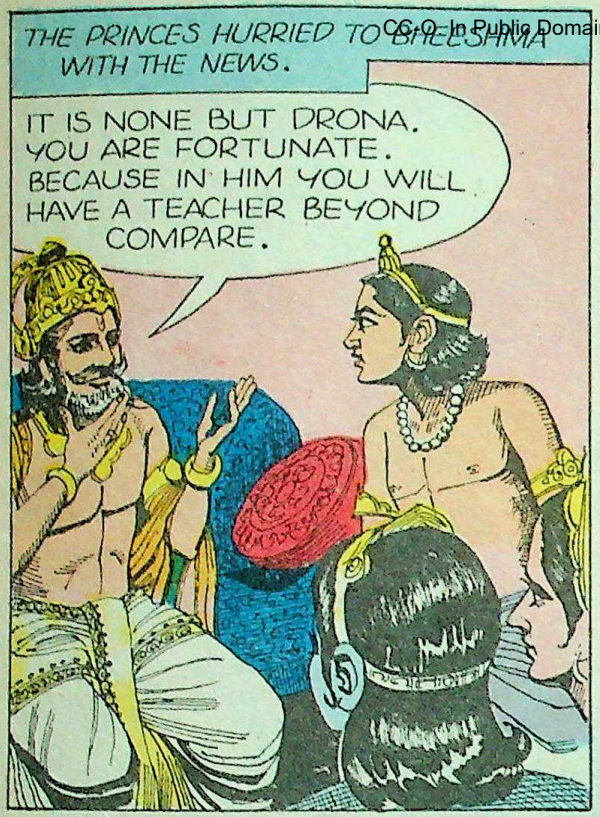

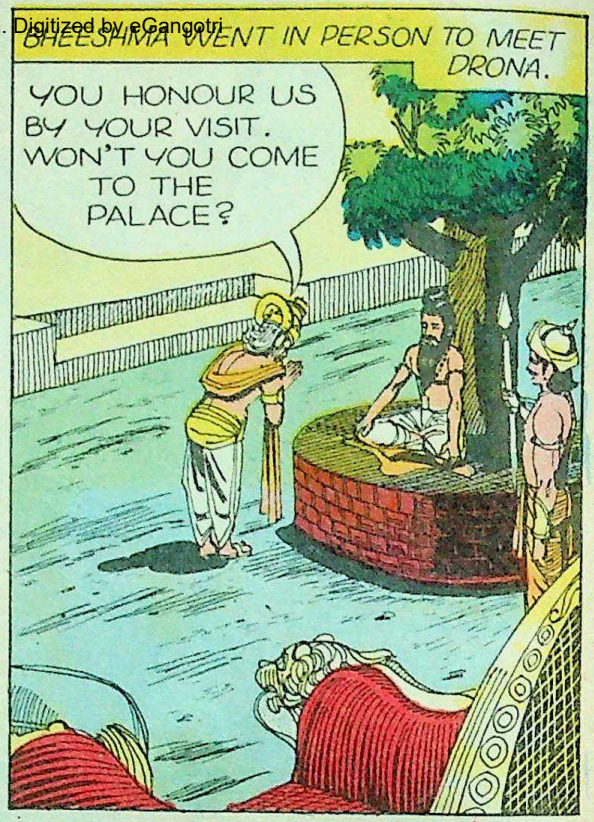

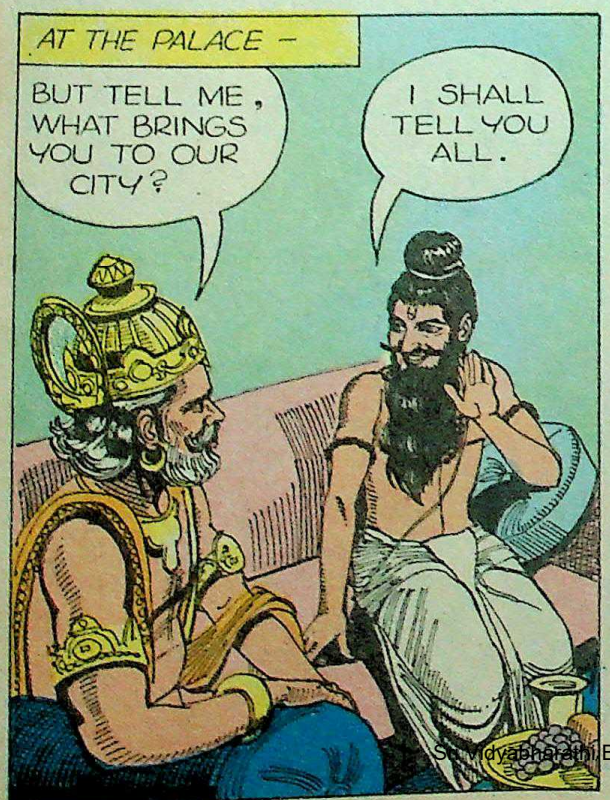

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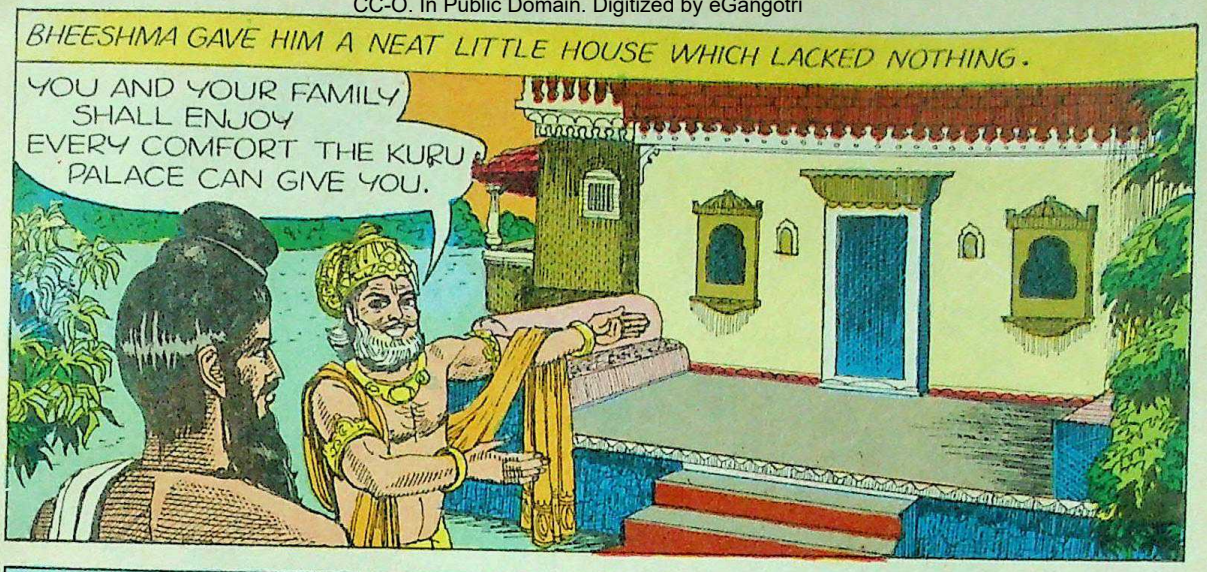

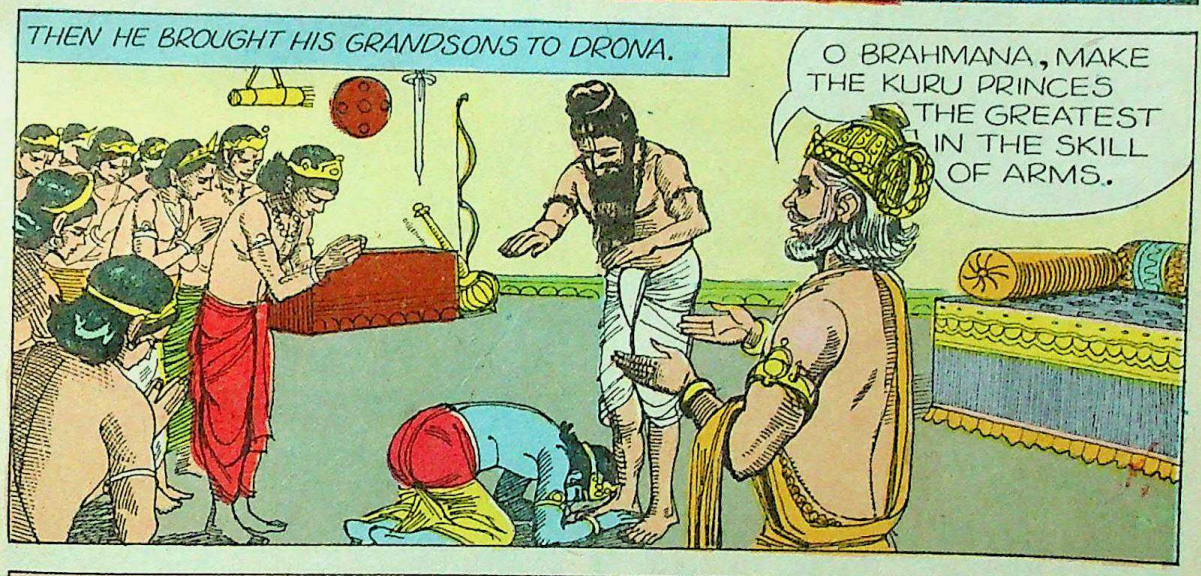

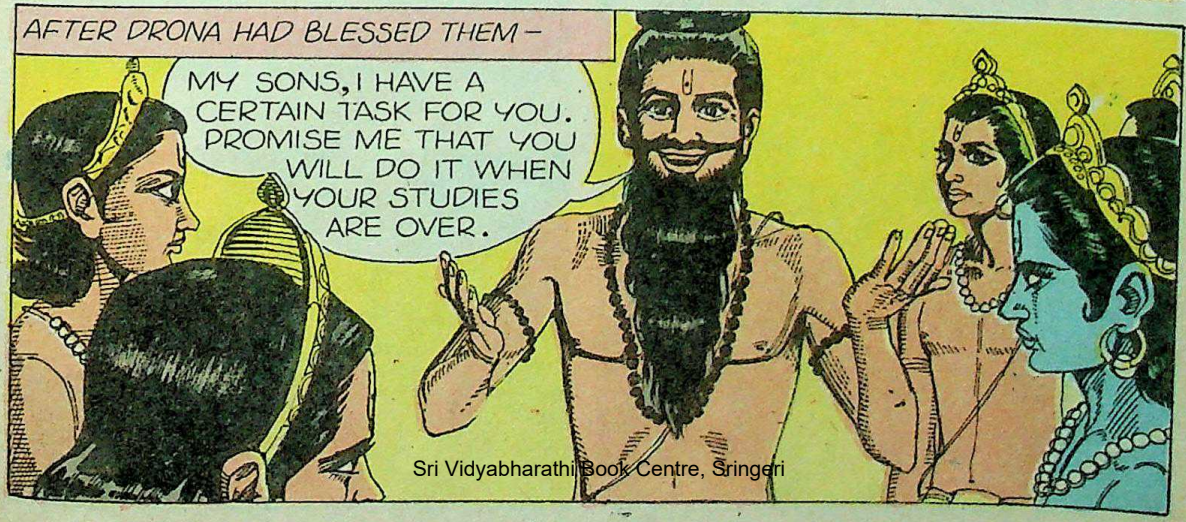

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ALL THE PRINCES REMAINED SILENT.

I PROMISE!

IT WAS ARJUNA, THE PANDAVA.

ARJUNA WAS AN EXCELLENT PUPIL AND SOON BECAME DRONA'S FAVOURITE.

THE GURU IS PARTIAL TO ARJUNA. HE DOES NOT LET ANY OF US SURPASS HIM.

ONE NIGHT, AS ARJUNA WAS DINING, A GUST OF WIND BLEW OUT THE LAMP. BUT ARJUNA CONTINUED EATING.

SUDDENLY AN IDEA STRUCK HIM.

I CAN EAT IN THE DARK OUT OF HABIT. I CAN MAKE SHOOTING IN THE DARK A SIMILAR HABIT!

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ARJUNA BEGAN PRACTISING EACH NIGHT WHEN IT WAS PITCH DARK.

ONE DAY DRONA HEARD THE TWANG OF HIS BOW AND CAME TO MEET HIM.

I SHALL TRAIN YOU TILL NO BOWMAN IN THE WORLD IS A MATCH FOR YOU.

AND DRONA KEPT HIS WORD. NEWS OF ARJUNA'S SKILL SPREAD FAR AND WIDE AND PRINCES AND KINGS FROM NEIGHBOURING KINGDOMS FLOCKED TO DRONA TO BECOME HIS PUPILS.

I AM EKALAVYA, THE NISHADA PRINCE. I WANT TO BECOME YOUR PUPIL.

A MERE NISHADA! SUPPOSING ONE DAY HE EXCELS MY ROYAL PUPILS?

I AM SORRY. I CANNOT ACCEPT YOU AS MY PUPIL.

EKALAVYA, WITH BENT HEAD, SADLY RETURNED TO THE FOREST.

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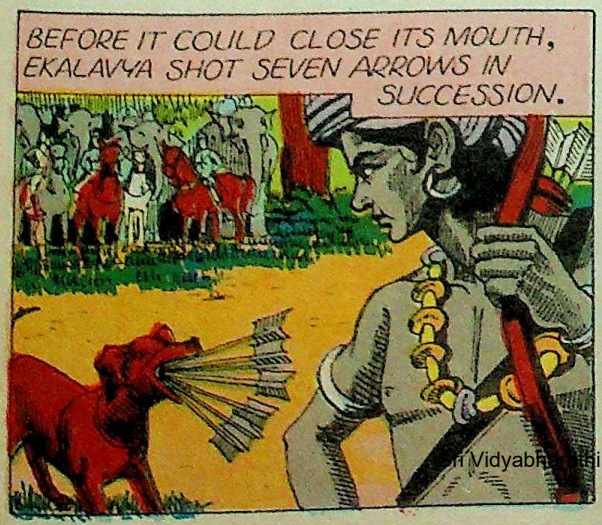

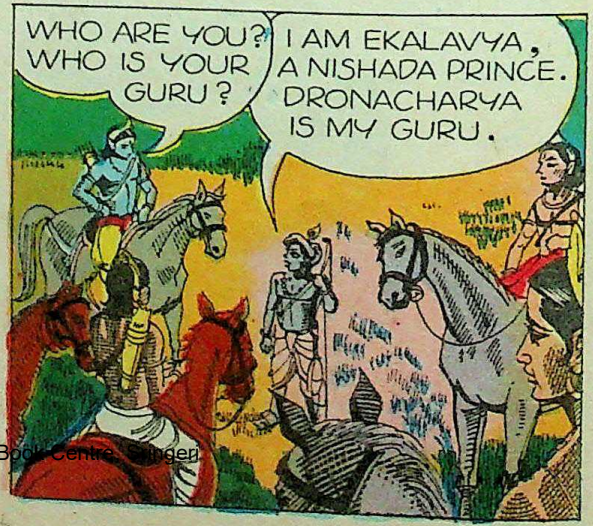

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WHEN THEY RETURNED TO THE PALACE, THE PRINCES NARRATED THE WHOLE INCIDENT TO DRONA.

THE OTHERS LEFT. ARJUNA STAYED BEHIND.

HOW COULD YOU ALLOW A NISHADA TO EXCEL ME? YOU PROM - ISED...

COME, LET US GO AND SEE THE WON- DROUS PER- FORMER.

WHEN EKALAVYA SAW DRONA, HE FELL AT HIS FEET.

ARISE, MY BOY. IF YOU TAKE ME FOR YOUR GURU, GIVE ME MY FEE!

O ILLUSTRIOUS GURU, WHAT SHALL I GIVE? THERE IS NOTHING I WOULD NOT GIVE MY GURU.

I WANT THE THUMB OF YOUR RIGHT HAND!

WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE, EKALAVYA CUT OFF HIS THUMB AND GAVE IT TO DRONA.

AND ARJUNA REMAINED UNEQUALLED.

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AT LAST THE PRINCES HAD ALL BECOME SKILLED WARRIORS.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO EXACT MY FEE.

ONE DAY HE ASSEMBLED ALL OF THEM.

CAPTURE DRUPADA, THE PANCHALA KING, AND GIVE HIM TO ME. THAT IS THE FEE I WANT FROM YOU, MY ACCOMPLISHED PUPILS.

WE SHALL DO AS YOU SAY.

THEY MOUNTED THEIR CHARIOTS AND RODE OUT ACCOMPANIED BY DRONA.

WHEN THEY NEARED DRUPADA'S CITY-

LET THE KAURAVAS HAVE A CHANCE TO DISPLAY THEIR SKILLS. FOR THEY WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO CAPTURE THE MIGHTY DRUPADA. WE CAN EXERT OURSELVES AFTER THAT.

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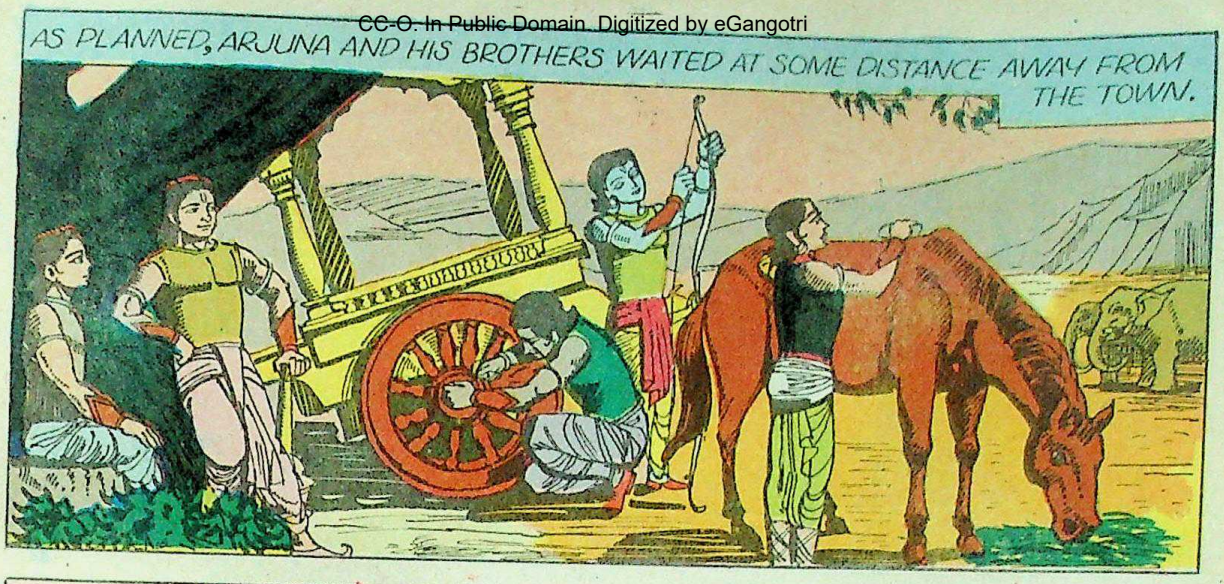

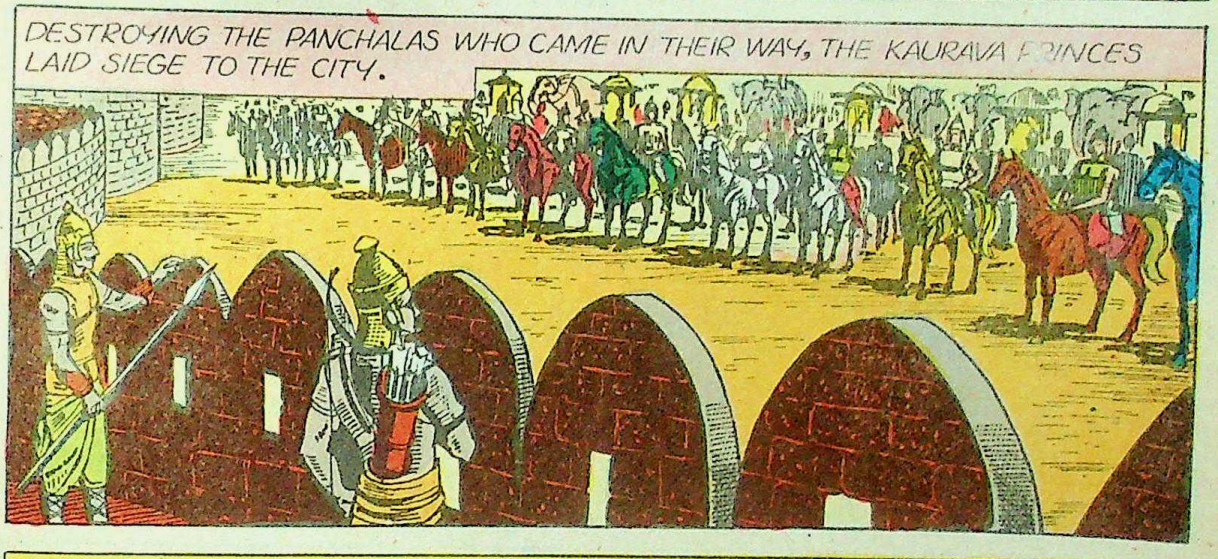

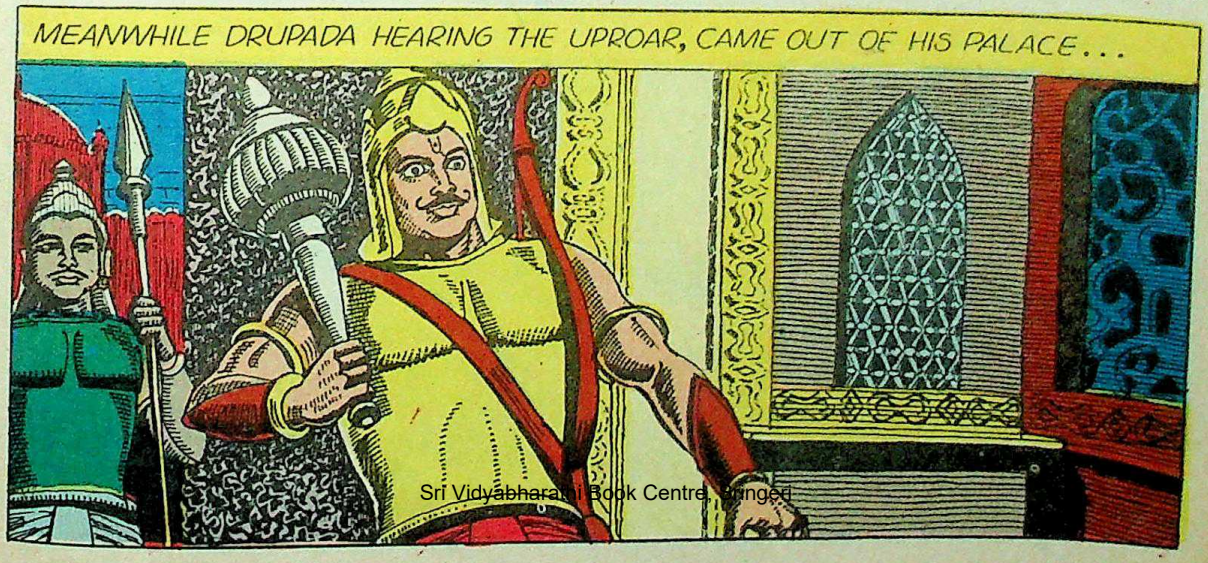

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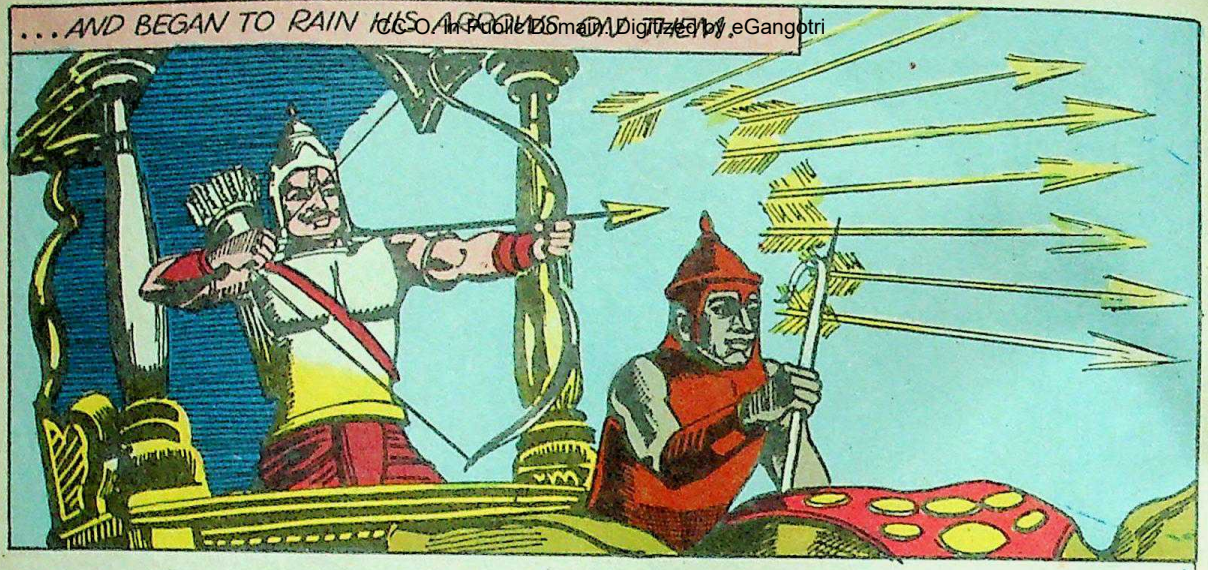
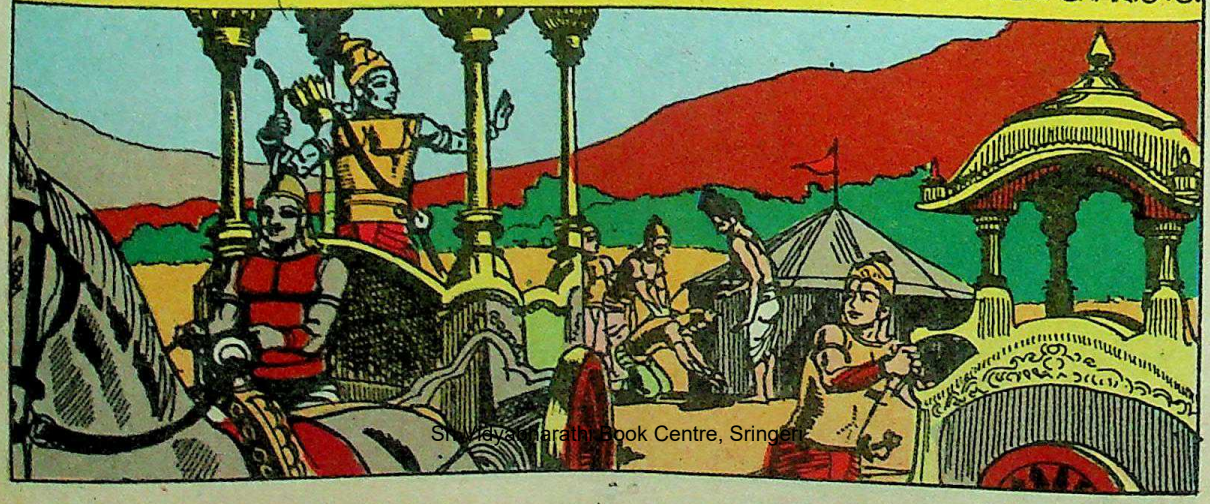
...AND BEGAN TO RAIN HIS ARROWS ON THEM.



THE KAURAVAS STUNNED BY THE DEFENCE, BROKE THEIR RANKS AND FLED, WAILING, TOWARDS THE PANDAVAS.

HEARING THE WAIL, THE PANDAVAS SALUTED DRONA AND MOUNTED THEIR CHARIOTS.



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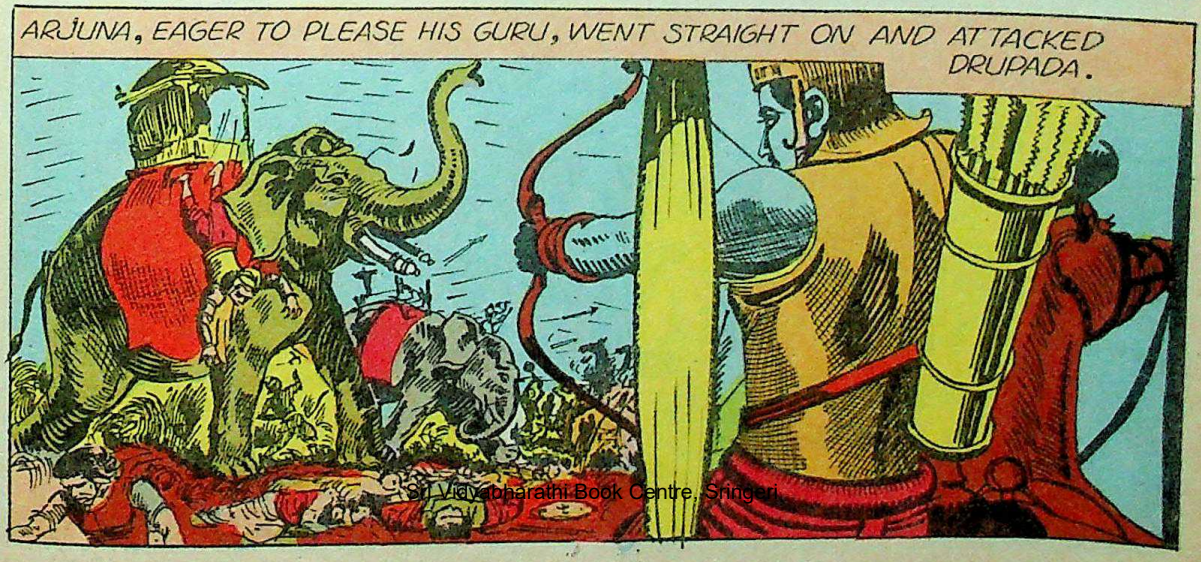

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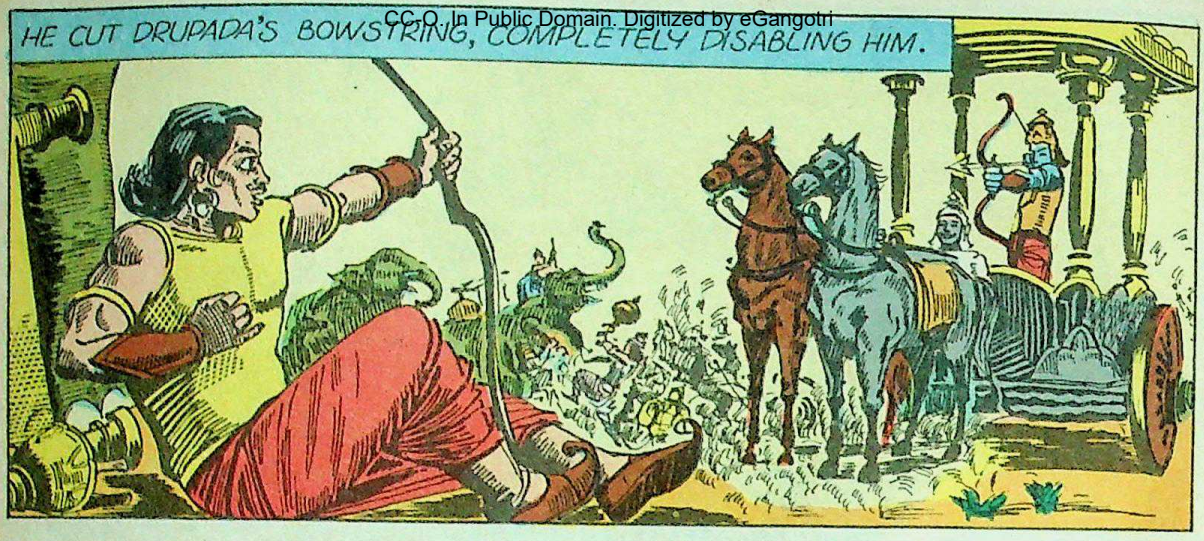

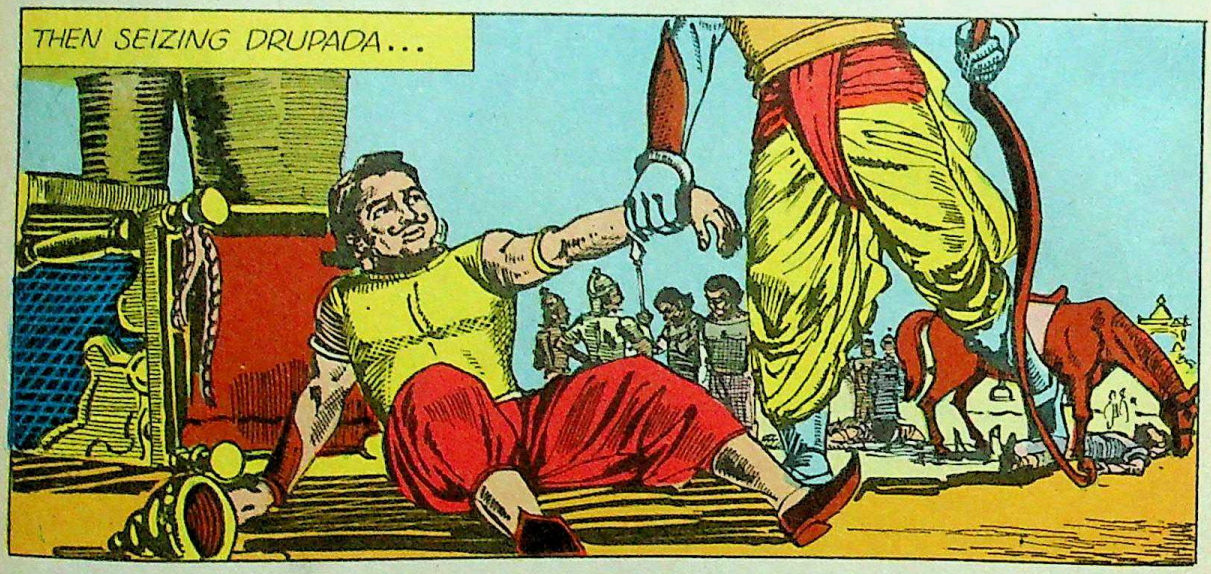

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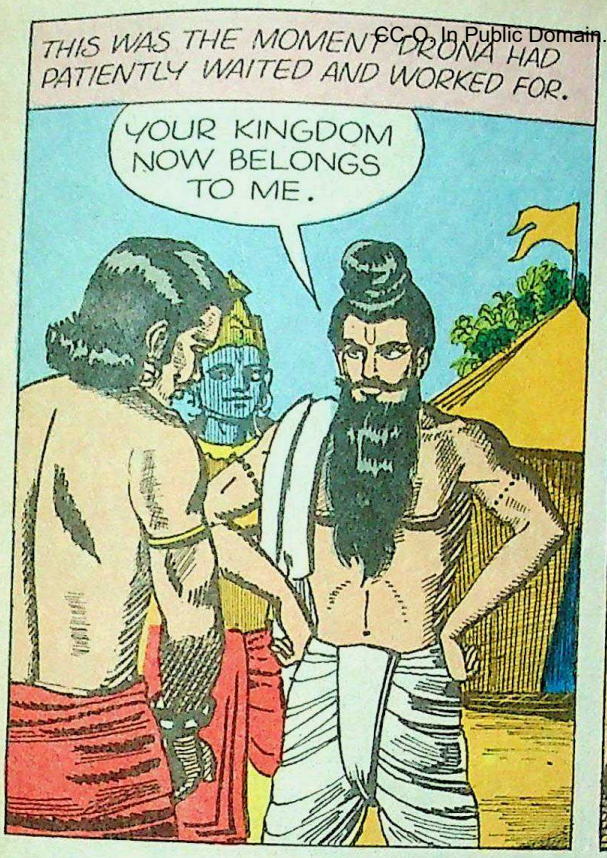

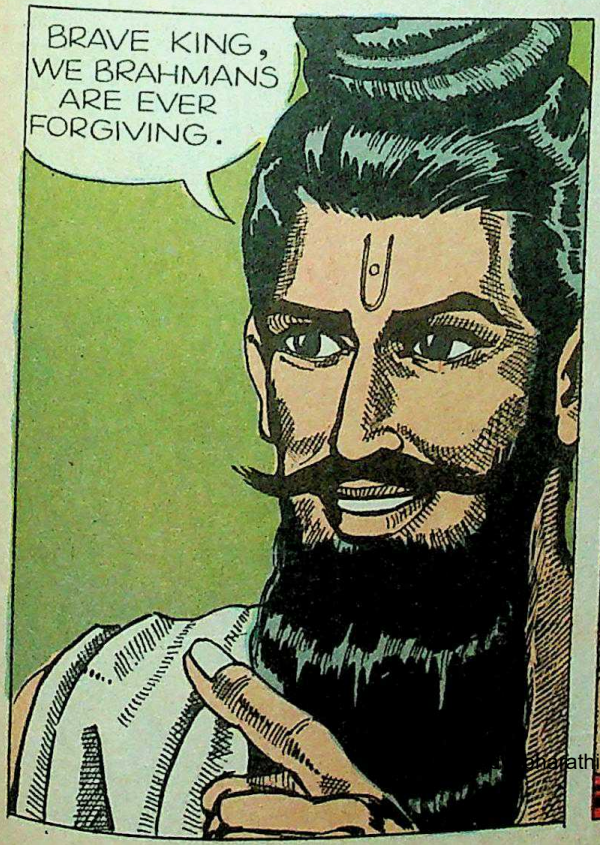

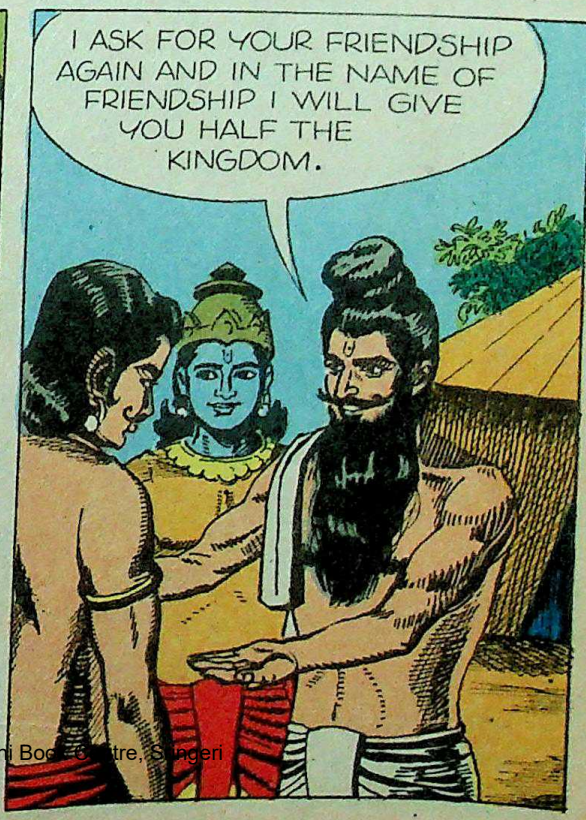

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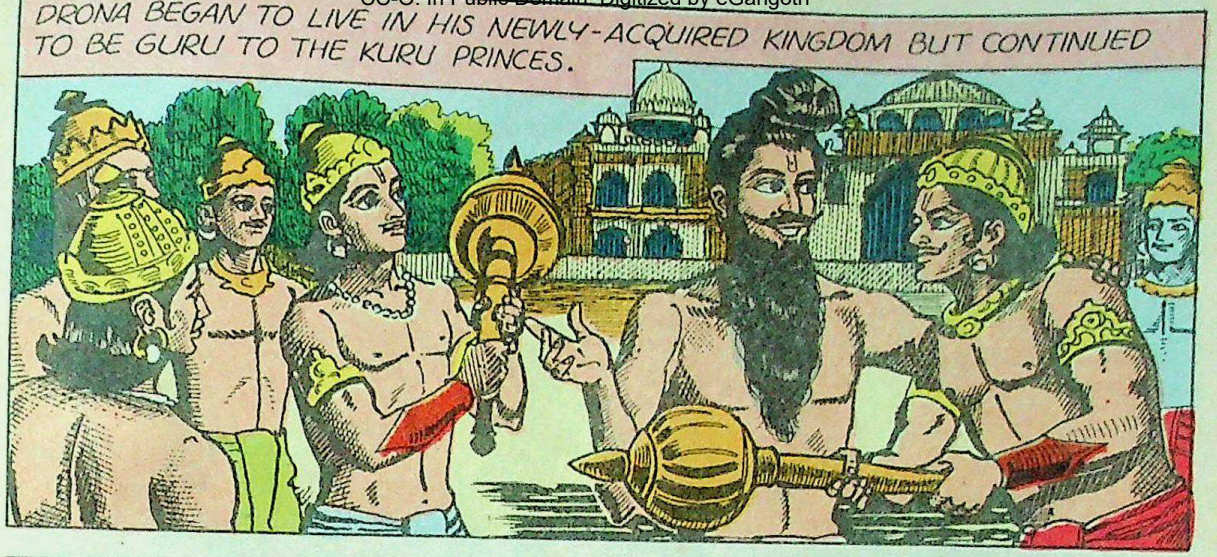

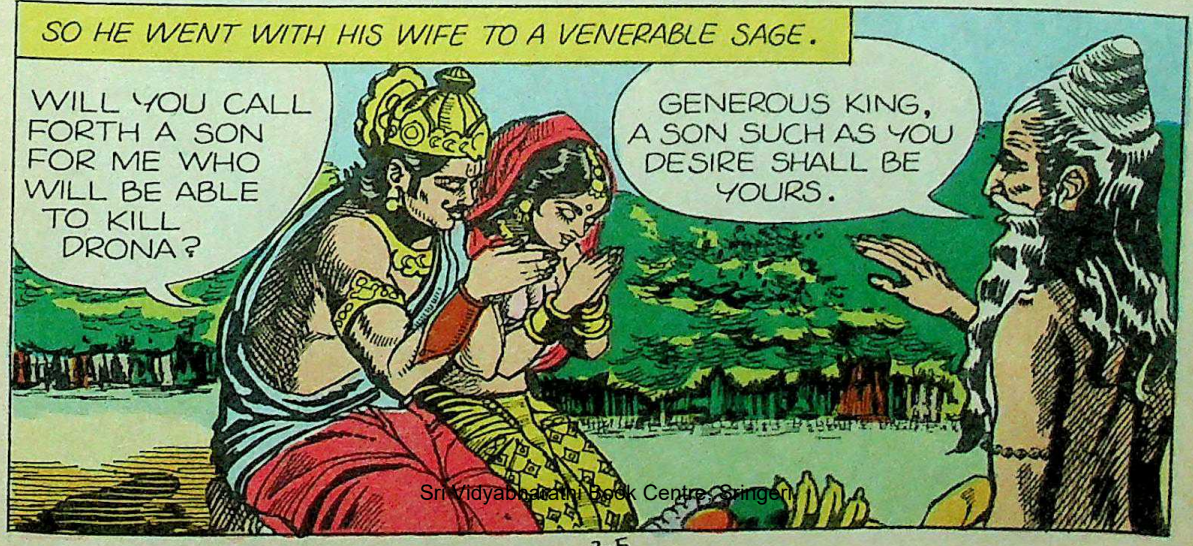

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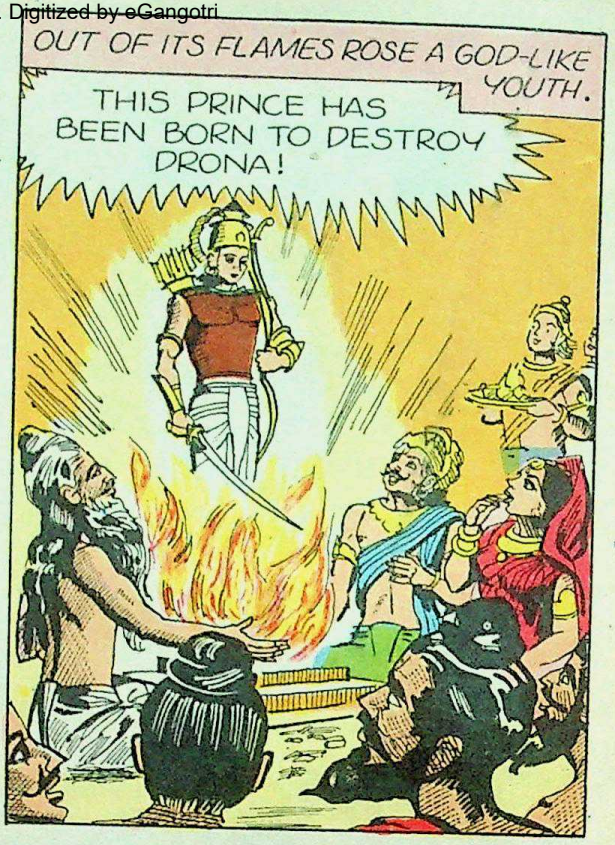

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THEN THE BRAHMANS GAVE THE BOY AND THE GIRL THEIR NAMES.

THIS GLORIOUS SON OF DRUPADA SHALL BE CALLED DHRISHTADYUMNA!

AND THIS DAUGHTER *KRISHNAA!

*LATER KNOWN AS DRAUPADI OR PANCHALI.

DRAUPADI BECAME THE WIFE OF THE PANDAVAS. THE KAURAVAS SUCCEEDED, BY UNFAIR MEANS, IN DEPRIVING THEIR COUSINS OF THEIR KINGDOM AND SENDING THEM INTO EXILE. AFTER THIRTEEN YEARS AND MANY ADVENTURES, THE PANDAVAS RETURNED TO ASK FOR THEIR KINGDOM. DURYODHANA, THE ELDEST KAURAVA, REFUSED TO PART WITH EVEN A SINGLE VILLAGE. WAR WAS DECLARED—THE GREAT 18-DAY WAR OF THE MAHABHARATA.
DRONA FOUGHT FOR THE KAURAVAS. DRUPADA AND DHRISHTADYUMNA NATURALLY BECAME THE ALLIES OF DRAUPADI'S HUSBANDS, THE PANDAVAS.

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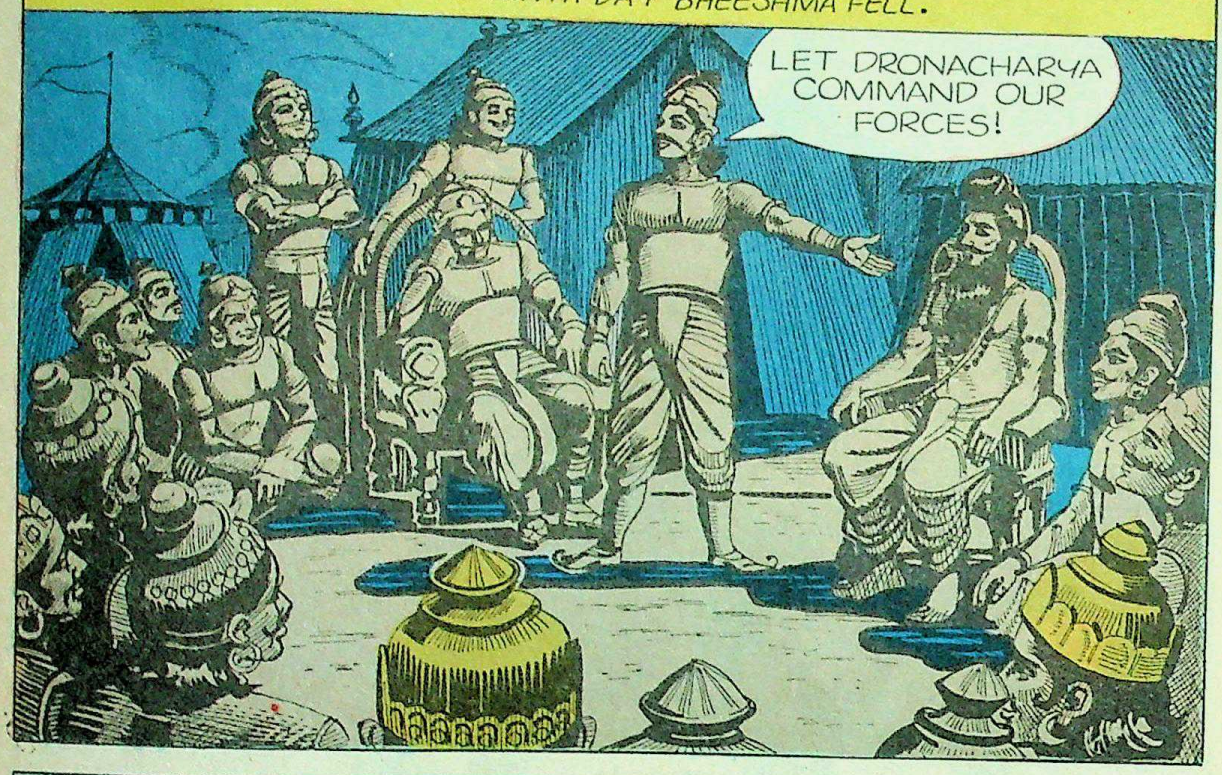
THEIR GRANDSIRE, BHEESHMA, LED THE KAURAVA ARMIES FOR THE FIRST TEN DAYS. ON THE TENTH DAY BHEESHMA FELL.



DRONA FILLED THE PANDAVA ARMIES WITH TERROR AND KILLED MANY OF THEM.

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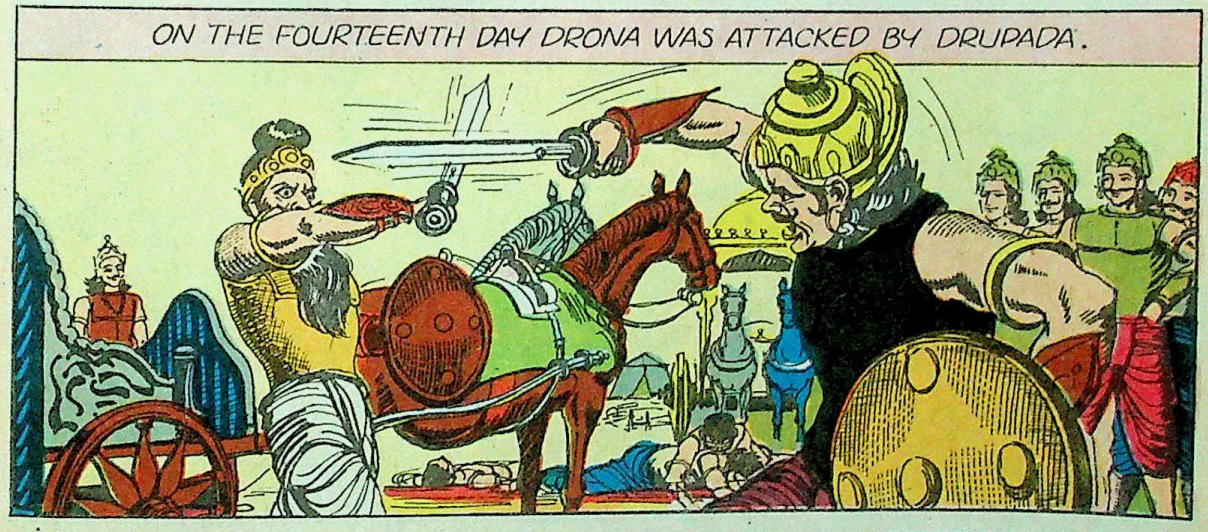

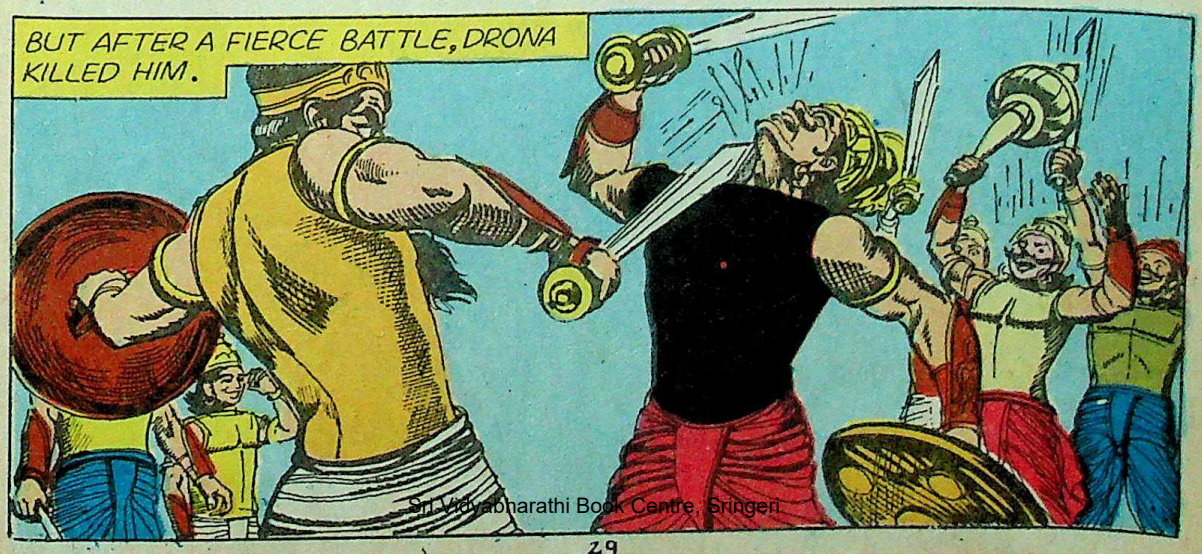

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DHRISHTADYUMNA WAS GRIEF-STRICKEN BY HIS FATHER'S DEATH. YUDHISHTHIRA CONSOLED HIM.

TAKE HEART, BRAVE ONE. YOUR FATHER'S DEATH SHALL BE AVENGED. YOU ARE BORN TO SLAY DRONA.

THEN KRISHNA SPOKE –

DRONA IS INVINCIBLE. WE WILL HAVE TO RESORT TO SUBTLE MEANS TO DEFEAT HIM.

TELL HIM THAT ASWATTHAMA IS DEAD...

NO! NO! THAT WOULD BE A LIE.

DRONACHARYA WILL BE DISABLED BY GRIEF.

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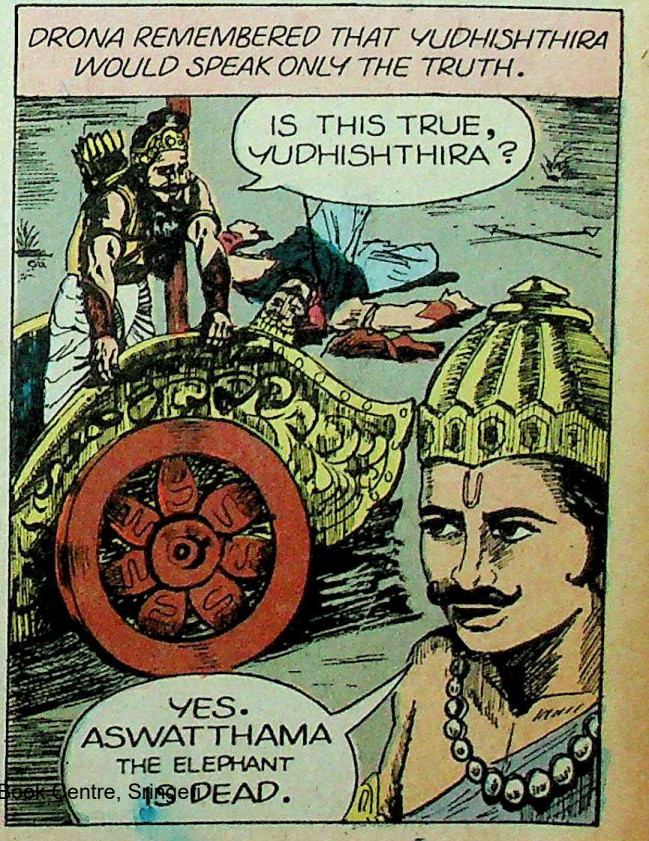

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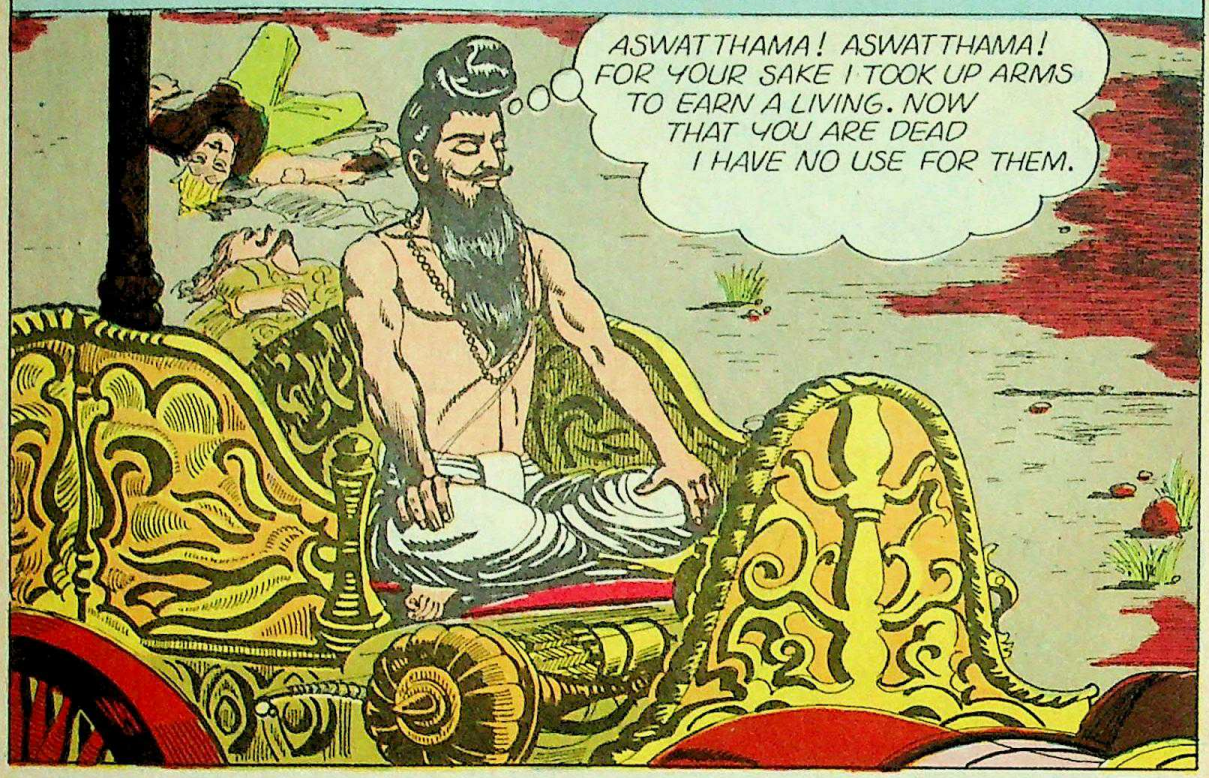
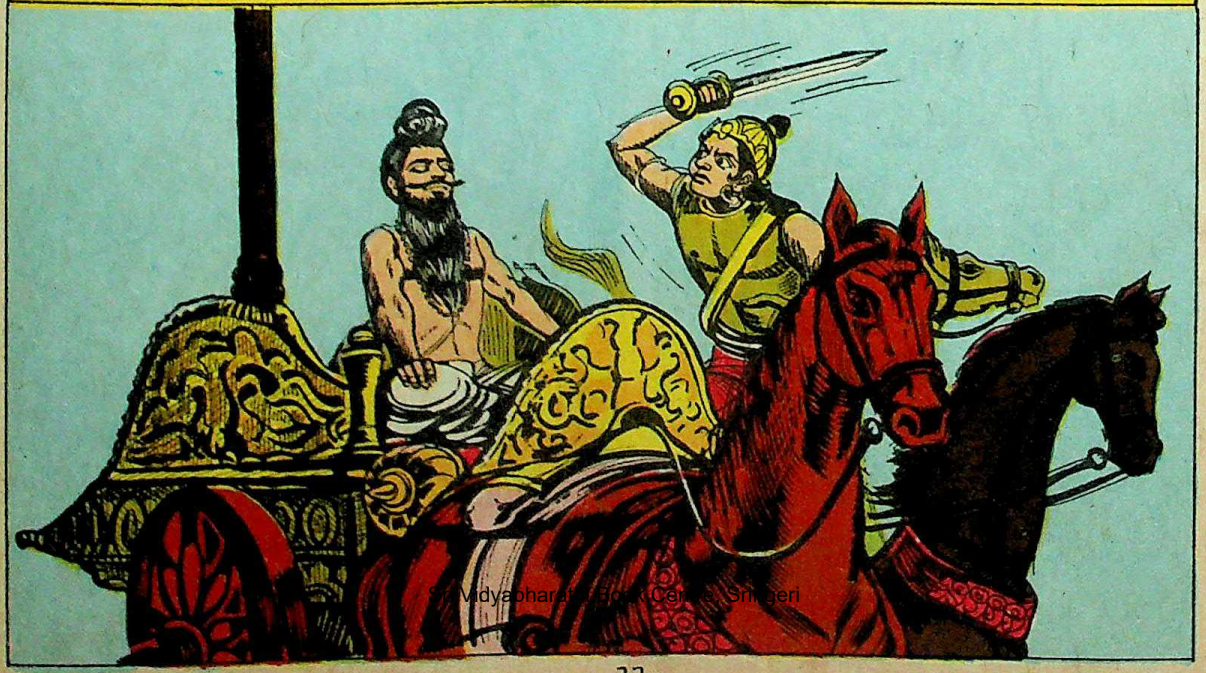
HE LAID DOWN HIS WEAPONS AND PREPARED HIMSELF FOR SAMADHI.



DHRISHTADYUMNA SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY AND WITH ONE STROKE OF HIS SWORD SLEW HIM. BUT HE HAD ONLY KILLED A LIFELESS BODY. FOR UNKNOWN TO DHRISHTADYUMNA, DRONA'S SOUL WAS ALREADY ON ITS UPWARD JOURNEY WHEN HE STRUCK.



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